(c) Launch of ASTROSAT is planned during the middle of 2007.

Development of Weather Stations by ISRO

3853. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that ISRO has developed Weather Stations in collaboration with private entrepreneurs;

(b) if so, the details thereof with name of collaborator and terms of collaboration;

(c) whether the Weather Stations are functional;

(d) if so, by when; and

(e) the level of accuracy of the data furnished by these stations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI PRITHVIRAJ CHAVAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The ISRO—Industry jointly developed Automatic Weather Station (AWS), is capable of collecting weather related data such as surface pressure, temperature, humidity, rainfall, wind speed etc., and transmitting them through data relay transponders of INSAT/KALPANA Satellites. This system is jointly developed by ISRO with the industrial partner M/s. Astra Microwave Products Limited (AMPL), Hyderabad. A productionisation agreement has been entered into with AMPL for the production and supply of AWS to be deployed in various parts of the country.

(c) and (d) The prototype of AWS has been successfully demonstrated and currently validation of the system is in progress jointly with the user community. The industry will commence regular supply in a phased manner from mid-2005.

(e) The level of accuracy of various meteorological parameters measured from the Automatic Weather Stations meets the user requirements.

Status of the manned mission to moon

3854. SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have plans to send a manned mission to moon within a few years; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the present status of the project?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI PRITHVIRAJ CHAVAN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Project running behind schedule

3855. DR. M.A.M. RAMASWAMY: Will the Minister of STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that many projects including mega projects are running behind schedule;

(b) if so, the details thereof as on date;

(c) the reasons for delay in completion of these projects;

(d) the total cost escalation of these projects due to time overrun; and

(e) the steps taken to complete these projects expeditiously?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) As on 1.1.2005, 249 projects are running behind schedule.

(c) The reasons for delay in completion of these projects include: (i) Financial Constraints, (ii) Delay in Land Acquisition and Rehabilitation, (iii) Delay in Award of Contracts, (iv) Delay in Equipment Supply and Construction, (v) Slow Progress by Contractors, (vi) Delay in Environment and others clearance, (vii) Law and Order, Geological Surprices.

(d) The cost escalation in delayed projects with respect to their latest approved cost is Rs.7,430.6 crore.

(e) The measures taken by the Ministry to ensure completion of pending projects expeditiously include: (i) ensuring funding of projects for implementation as per the work programme; (ii) in-depth review of projects on monthly and quarterly basis by the Government; (iii) follow up with the State Governments in respect of problems relating to land acquisition, rehabilitation related issues, forest clearances, infrastructure facilities and ensuring law and order at project sites, etc.; (iv) ensuring the Empowered Committee in the administrative Ministries to review the departmentally